WITH EXERCISES AND ANSWER KEY

Second Edition

Editor : Cheryl Groth

Cheryl Groth | Irene L. Kendra | Sutanto Leo
Sandra Lilyana | Edward Aldrich Lukman | Yugianingrum

Essay Writing
English for Academic Purposes

With Exercises and Answer Key

Editor: Cheryl Groth

Cheryl Groth, B.A., Grad.Dip.Ed. (Indonesian, Music, TESOL), M.Ed.

Drs. Sutanto Leo, M.Ed. in TESOL, Dip.TESL

Sandra Lilyana, S.S., M.A.

Dra. Irene L. Kendra, M.M.

Drs. Edward Aldrich Lukman, M.Hum.

Dr. Yugianingrum, M.S.

Penerbit ANDI Yogyakarta

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Oleh: Sutanto Leo, dkk.

Editor : Cheryl Groth
Setting : Sri Sulistyani
Desain Cover : dan_dut
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Jl. Beo 38-40, Telp. (0274) 561881 (Hunting), Fax. (0274) 588282 Yogyakarta 55281

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Jl. Beo 38-40, Telp. (0274) 561881 (Hunting), Fax. (0274) 588282 Yogyakarta 55281

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6. Yugianingrum

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Preface

Welcome to the second edition of *Essay Writing*. There are six authors who have worked together on this writing team. Knowing each of the authors professionally, I can confidently say that each of these six authors offers something distinctive to this book from their own interests, expertise, and experience in writing and in teaching subjects of Writing at Maranatha Christian University in Bandung, Indonesia.

You may be wondering why we have produced a second edition of this book. After noting particular changes in the MLA system of writing, particularly regarding citations and documentation of references, the *Essay Writing* team decided that we wish to see an update of this book that will guide writers and prospective writers according to the current *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, produced by The Modern Language Association of America in 2009. This does not mean that we assume that all readers of this book will use the MLA system of writing. We also provide examples of how to write citations and provide references using the current APA model of writing. But, since this is a book which is intended to provide the readers with guidelines for academic writing, the authors have seen the need to make a decision about which writing model to present throughout the book, and to use the current regulations of that model. Our decision is to model the formatting style and citations from the current MLA system.

It is the team's hope that this book will be helpful for students of English who wish to write short formal essays according to currently acknowledged Western standards of formal writing. Apart from research the team has carried out in books and on websites, there has also been communication with universities in Australia and the United States of America to identify current trends in formal writing. We have taken these steps so that the material in this book will assist readers in Indonesia who hope to study abroad, that is, for students who wish to pursue an acceptable standard of formal writing that will enable them to adjust to formal writing conventions in Western countries. It is also our hope that this book will challenge serious writers of formal essays of

various kinds, especially throughout high schools and universities in Indonesia, to follow the directions for academic writing portrayed in this book. It is our sincere hope that the readers will find the directions both useful and useable.

This book combines theory and practice in each unit. While there are explanations in each unit, there are also Practice sessions for the students. The Practice parts are related to the information in that unit. The Practices are consciously presented in varied formats, to instill interest for various kinds of readers, while at the same time providing the students with aspects of practice that are referred to in the unit. Answer Keys at the back of the book give answers, or, in some cases, possible answers, to some of the Practice sessions. A Glossary is also included at the back for readers to find a definition of certain words used in the book.

Our deepest gratitude goes to the Almighty Lord for His grace and continuous help as we have walked through the steps of the process of writing both the original *Essay Writing* book and this revised edition. Without the Lord, we could have easily despaired that such a project was too idealistic and never have pursued the take-off stage for publishing. Therefore, our thankfulness is expressed first and foremost to our Almighty Lord, the God of truth and knowledge.

We also thank the students in the Critical Essay Writing classes at Maranatha Christian University over the past years, and also the high school students who have taken part in an essay writing competition our writing team held based on the original *Essay Writing* book. You have given some practical and useful comments, which resulted in some changes in this revised edition. Please accept our apologies that not all your suggestions could be accommodated in this revision. The team would not pretend that the book is perfect, as the writers, being very human, are not perfect. Your suggestions and comments could therefore be valuable to us.

Cheryl Groth
Coordinator *Essay Writing* team

Course Design

Description of the Course:

This course book, which requires at least twenty learning hours, is directed at students from upper intermediate to an advanced level of English who wish to practise academic essay writing. This book can be used by university students majoring in English, students who want to take postgraduate study abroad, English course learners, or those who would like to contribute articles for publication.

Most units in this book provide a graded writing process, beginning with controlled exercises, then guided exercises, and finally free exercises. The practice sections encourage students to practise writing on the following stages of academic writing: deciding on a topic and title, gathering information, writing an introduction, developing main paragraphs, quotations and documentation, commenting on data, writing a conclusion, writing a summary, writing a review, writing an abstract, writing references, revising and editing texts.

Objectives of the Course:

a. To encourage and motivate learners to practise writing essays.
b. To give learners ample opportunities to write essays.
c. To make students realize that writing needs practice.
d. To let students feel a natural process of writing.
e. To practise focusing on the message, organization, and language.
f. To make sure students understand that writing is not just a talent but takes practice.
g. To develop learners' courage to improve their writing fluency.
h. To make learners able to participate in academic writing for publication.
i. To create a habit of writing.
j. To acknowledge and respect ideas of other writers.
k. To avoid plagiarism.
l. To quote and write references or bibliographies properly.

How to Use this Book:

a. The course book can be used as the main learning material in an essay writing class.
b. Activities or exercises should be adapted to the learners' major or interest.
c. It is possible for learners to use this book for self-study, but they need proof-readers or editors to give some feedback.
d. It is beneficial to learners if the teachers have experience in writing and publishing articles or books.

Tips for Learners:

a. Study each unit and practise every exercise given in it.
b. Gather information using the techniques suggested in the pre-writing activities.
c. Try to get used to getting information from different sources.
d. Practise writing paragraph by paragraph.
e. Work on making your sentences smooth, clear, and interesting.
f. Feel free to ask proof-readers to read your writing before submitting it to the teacher.
g. Write articles about current issues and send them to the mass media.

Tips for Teachers:

a. Be creative; do not apply monotonous teaching techniques and methods. Start the lesson by doing some elicitation, brainstorming, icebreakers, etc.
b. Create a relaxed atmosphere and encourage learners to write. Appreciate every piece of writing done by learners; do not discourage learners by giving very slight or direct corrections, giving negative comments, or looking down on the learners.
c. Encourage learners to write in small groups until they are confident enough to write individually.
d. Encourage learners to do peer proof-reading and correction.
e. Note the main language problems of the learners and give them general feedback sometimes.

f. Do not only ask learners to write in the classroom but also out of the classroom, where they can get sufficient references.
g. Inform the learners of the marking system and apply the writing band scale provided, or create your own.

Marking System:

Teachers can apply the following writing band scale. Prior to this, teachers should do a piloting application. This requires that teachers should understand clearly the idea of the band scale and be able to distinguish each band from the others. For example, Band A ranges from 80 to 100, but teachers still have to consider which mark between this range is suitable for the writer, whether the learner reaches 80, 85, 91, or another mark in that range. It is hoped that the lowest score is not less than 55, which means a fail, but again it is the teachers' right to give less than 55 or even less than 40 if that reflects the level of writing produced.

Writing Band Scales

A.	80 – 100	It is well organized. The message is completely comprehensible. Arguments are relevant and related to writer's view. Main ideas and effective supporting ideas are clearly stated. The language is clear, smooth, and interesting, and is consistently accurate, showing a full command of complex structure. There are no major errors of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, or grammar.
B.	67 – 79	It is well organized and highly comprehensible. Arguments are quite relevant in relation to writer's view. Main ideas and effective supporting ideas are almost clearly stated. There is a clear message with only minor loss of detail and little need for correction of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, or grammar. The language is clear and interesting.

C.	55 – 66	It is rather well organized. Arguments are rather relevant in relation to writer's view. Main ideas and supporting ideas are rather clear. The message is almost clear but with some loss of detail. Many corrections of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, or grammar are needed.
D.	41- 54	Its organization and message are rather difficult to be followed. Arguments are only slightly relevant in relation to writer's view. Main ideas and supporting ideas rather trouble the readers. The language is rather unclear and has frequent errors of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, or grammar.
E.	40 or less	Its organization and message are difficult to be followed. Arguments are not relevant or not related to writer's view. Main ideas and supporting ideas are not clearly stated. The language is not clear and has frequent, serious errors of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation or grammar.

Note: A+, B+, and C+ are sometimes added in a writing band scale. In this case, written work which is given a C+ grade is higher in quality than C according to the criteria which is given in the above band scale for C, but is lower than the quality of work required for a B grade. If there is a B+ in the writing band scale, it is higher than a standard B but lower than A. A+ would be higher than a standard A grade.

Additional Information:

The Answer Key and the Glossary at the back part of the book are very helpful for teachers and learners. The Answer Key consists of some suggested answers to exercises. The Glossary gives definitions of words in English.

The writers realize that this book is not perfect; therefore, constructive criticism and suggestions are most welcome.

Contents

Unit 1
Basic Principles in Academic Writing

Edward A. Lukman

Objectives:

a. Learners will know basic principles of academic writing.

b. Learners from any faculty or department will be able to follow general principles to produce good academic writing.

Writing, as a process of expressing ideas or thoughts in words, should be done at our leisure. How can we do something that we do not enjoy? Writing can be very enjoyable as long as we have the ideas and the means to achieve it. This chapter will lead you to a very pleasant journey where you can experience the process of writing academically.

There are three basic principles in academic writing, namely, content, register, and offences. Referring to content, it should be made clear, specific, and relevant. The register should be formal, to the point, and concise. On the other hand, academic writing should be free from offences and, in most cases, should avoid sensitive issues.

1.1 CONTENT

Content refers to the topic and its explanation or elaboration, discussion, evaluation, and conclusion. In fact, it is the core of a piece of writing. Therefore, it is significant that it should be clear, specific, and relevant.

1.1.1 Clear

The writer must have a clear concept of what to convey to the reader. The readers expect a clear picture of what the writer intends to tell them. Clarity is one of the requirements of academic writing. As a result, ambiguities and misinterpretations should be avoided. The following

example demonstrates clarity, so that the reader knows for sure what the discussion will be about.

Example:

In this thesis, I propose to analyze the symbolism in *The Pilgrim's Progress* with regard to religious allusion.

1.1.2 Specific

Furthermore, the content should be specific enough for the topic to be focused. In this way, over-generalization can be avoided. If a piece of writing is too general, it becomes vague. As a consequence, the reader cannot really grasp the meaning or message that the writer means to convey. The following example states specifically what will be the focus of the discussion.

Example:

There are several reasons why a strike happens in a company; however, in this article I will focus only on labour disputes with management.

1.1.3 Relevant

A piece of writing, moreover, should be relevant to the topic. Relevant ideas can guarantee that there will be no confusion in understanding the message. Therefore, the readers can feel more confident in understanding what they read. In the following sentence, a student is preparing the readers for a thesis analyzing advertisements using the sociolinguistic approach. Her thesis is not about a film, or therapy for stroke patients, or irrigation, but about advertisements.

Example:

I will include Sociolinguistics to support my analysis, giving specific examples from advertisements.

1.2 REGISTER

Register refers to the style of language and choice of vocabulary used in a particular piece of writing; this could be formal or informal. Academic writing differs from non-academic writing in terms of being formal, to the point, and concise.

1.2.1 Formal

Formality refers to a particular style of writing in which non-standard, colloquial, or slangy language should be avoided. Therefore, the language should be free from grammatical errors, simplistic sentence structure, and casual expressions, including too many idioms or phrasal verbs. Contracted forms are not suitable in academic writing.

Examples:

a. Contracted forms: I'm, you'll, let's (unacceptable)

b. SMS text language: u, ur, gr8 (unacceptable)

c. Slang or colloquial: wanna, ripper of a time, spunky (unacceptable)

d. Informal register: want to, get (try to change to vocabulary reflecting a higher register: would like to, acquire/obtain)

In other words, academic writing pays more attention to choice of vocabulary, sentence structure, and style. When you read the following sentence, notice its use of specific vocabulary and the use of a conjunction to avoid simplistic sentence construction.

Example:

Hypertension is a common problem in adults, especially in older person. It is the major risks factors of stroke, heart failure, coronary artery disease, and renal failure; all are important contributors to mortality and functional disability (Kane 281).

1.2.2 To the Point

Different from storytelling, academic writing should be direct, in the sense that the writer states directly what he/she wants to tell the readers without wandering here and there. In this way, it can be easily understood. Moreover, it saves time and energy. The following statement explicitly gives the purpose of the article.

Example:

This article discusses the important role of Total Quality Management as a strategy to enhance an organization's competitive advantage.

1.2.3 Concise

Being concise means being brief or short. Brevity is important in academic writing; long-winded explanations become unclear, and the readers can lose their interest and concentration. Although it is brief, it does not mean that it is inadequate. A clear explanation is necessary, and including a good example is also recommended as an illustration of the point being made.

Example:

Learning a second language involves four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

1.3 OFFENCES

A piece of academic writing should be free from offences, especially plagiarism and sensitive issues. Plagiarism can be in the form of direct quotations, paraphrases, and specific ideas. On the other hand, sensitive issues are concerned with race, religion, and different social groups.

1.3.1 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is generally known as "academic theft," which means taking other people's ideas without acknowledging their contribution. In other words, the writer does not mention the source from which he has taken the ideas, opinions, or specific words. Plagiarism can be in the form of

direct quotations, paraphrases, or ideas which are not considered general knowledge.

a. **Direct Quotations**

Some writers, consciously or unconsciously, quote the exact words of other people, probably experts in particular fields, without using quotation marks or indenting for longer quotations, or without acknowledging the source of the quotations. Similarly, other writers directly quote from on-line information with the assumption that they are free to do so without acknowledging the source of the information. Note: Examples of how to do this are provided in Unit 6 of this book.

b. **Paraphrases**

In most cases, a paraphrase is preferable to a quotation. If, for example, the style of the original text is complicated, it can be simplified to make it clearer. If the text is too long, it can be shortened. The writer still has to identify the source. However, a paraphrase is not a summary. In fact, it is a restatement of the same idea of the original statement. The following two sentences are paraphrases of each other.

Example:

There is a possibility that the riots were aimed at disturbing the coming election.

It is possible that the aim of the riots is to disturb the coming election.

c. **Ideas**

It is not necessary to state the source of items of general and of generally-acknowledged information, such as the world is round, or the elephant is an animal. However, more specific or less well-known items of information, or information attributed to particular people, need to be acknowledged and documented with the source's information.

1.3.2 Sensitive Issues

There are certain issues which should be avoided in academic writing because they are personal, very sensitive, or controversial. These issues include different social groups, religions, and races.

a. **Social Groups**
   Social groups refer to majority and minority groups, and can highlight different social classes and economic levels. This issue is best avoided, considering that it only causes never-ending conflicts instead of mutual trust or understanding.

b. **Religions**
   Since religion is very personal, it is advisable that writing about a religious matter be written for a particular religious group only. In other words, it is best if it is exclusively written for people of a specific religion without involving other religions, let alone comparing religions or making statements about the shortcomings of other religions. Indicating a particular religious superiority or preference is not recommended at all!

c. **Races**
   Racial issues in multi-racial countries like Indonesia can be problematic.

   Therefore, in writing about such issues, special attention should be paid to avoiding friction between races, which might only result in social prejudice and unresolved conflicts.

Practice 1
Identify Sensitive Issues

Study the following paragraphs and underline the words or phrases that contain sensitive issues. The first example (Paragraph 1) is done for you.

Paragraph 1:

In some parts of this archipelago, certain religions are always <u>causing problems</u>. The problems are very complicated as they involve not only religion but also ethnicity. Some ethnics feel that they <u>are superior to</u>

others. Although we are one nation, our appearance can be very different. Some of us have dark skin, brown skin, yellow skin, or even fair skin. And, very often, people judge a person by their appearance.

Paragraph 2:

We cannot close our eyes that men are superior to women in many ways. Men are physically stronger than women. Therefore, men are better qualified in most fields. It is true that women are emotionally more sensitive than men, which means that they can show more affection to their spouses, children, and families. However, women are so emotionally affected that it is very easy for them to panic in certain situations. Many times their emotions are stronger than their rational thinking, so that they become poor decision makers. On the other hand, men are masters of the situation. They can make wiser decisions, even in emergencies.

Paragraph 3:

Urbanization is one of the major problems in our country. From year to year, especially after Eid al-Fitr, people from small villages come to big cities. These people are very uneducated and cannot do anything. Therefore, they only cause problems. It would be wise if the government made a regulation to ban such people from coming to big cities. Without taking firm action, it is impossible to avoid the exodus of village people to big cities, which eventually will only bring social unrest and mass unemployment to our nation.

Practice 2
Rewrite the Paragraphs

Improve paragraphs 2 and 3 so that there are no longer any sensitive issues. You do not need to change the tense.

Paragraph 2:

Paragraph 3:

Unit 2
Meaningful Reading for Academic Writing

Cheryl Groth

Objectives:

a. Learners will be able to read texts using techniques of speed reading, scanning, and skimming.

b. Learners will be able to show meaningful reading skills for note-taking by using techniques of summarizing, writing quotations, and paraphrasing.

c. Learners will be able to show meaningful reading skills by using techniques of highlighting, underlining, and vertical line-marking.

d. Learners will be able to identify which techniques of meaningful reading skills are appropriate for them personally.

e. Learners will be able to choose among the techniques of meaningful reading skills and note-taking that they are not in the habit of using to be helpful for them to apply.

Practice 1
Discussion with Your Friends

a. Do you always read every book from beginning to end? What about articles, letters, e-mails, or information on the back of DVDs? Explain your answer.

b. If you wish to understand what you are reading on a deeper level, how many times do you read the material? Give details about the way you read for greater understanding.

c. If you wish to understand what you are reading, do you try to remember all the events and data presented? Explain your answer.

There are many ways to do note-taking when you read texts, and there is no "best" way. Find the ways which are suitable for you from the various techniques described below. There are examples and practice exercises for the techniques presented to assist you in gaining experience in identifying and using these techniques. Then you will be in a better position to choose which techniques could be most helpful for you personally.

2.1 ONLY SOME TEXTS NEED TO BE READ COMPLETELY

Texts are written for different purposes, and we read for different purposes. If we do not complete the reading of a novel, we miss the plot development, the climax, and the resolution at the end. But telephone books, dictionaries, and reference books are generally consulted only when needing to find specific information for particular reasons, and we would therefore find it unusual for someone to intensely read such books from beginning to end.

We make choices about which reading materials are important or of personal interest to read word for word. When gathering information for an assignment, there are often so many books or internet articles which could be read. But we obviously do not have the time, or the interest, to read them all. It is clear, then, that not all reading texts need to be read completely and thoroughly by the reader.

2.2 ONLY SOME TEXTS NEED TO BE READ MORE THAN ONCE

If we decide that a journal or internet article or a book needs to be read totally, then the question is "How many times do I need to read this? Is once enough?" There is no single or simple answer to this question. But if the article or book is of particular interest or has been deeply meaningful or "life-changing," or if the text is necessary for study or analysis, one reading will be insufficient. In such cases, two or three readings would be worthwhile. And each time you read it, the technique you use for reading may not necessarily be the same. Perhaps you do not read such texts at the same speed of reading, or completely, each time. You may choose from various reading techniques explained below.

2.3 QUICK READING

There is more than one way to do a quick reading of a text. The purpose of using each of the quick reading methods below is not the same, and you will find each of them useful at different times in your reading experiences.

2.3.1 Speed Reading

Imagine you are travelling from Bandung to Semarang on an express bus. You want to reach your destination quickly. No stops are made on the journey for eating or sightseeing or taking photographs.

This is like a quick reading of an article or book. Of course you may read it in stages, not just at one sitting, as it is possible that you won't have your beauty sleep if you keep on reading! Of course you can eat a meal before you finish reading the text. But this reading is quick, with no deep thinking on your part. You do not even try to look up words in the dictionary in this quick reading, as long as you see the "big picture" of what you are reading.

The strategy of reading quickly, just to get the overall picture, without consulting a dictionary, is known as speed reading. Letting your eyes glance at units of words, like phrases, instead of reading every single word, is helpful in speed reading.

2.3.2 Skim Reading

Sometimes we just want to read enough to know the perspective of the writer or to locate the general idea, not to get detailed information. The technique of skim reading or "skimming" can be used for this purpose. It is also described as running your eyes over a text to get a quick idea of the gist of a text (Harmer 202), to get general understanding, without looking for details. Good advice about skim reading can be found in the following quotation: "In skimming you read sections only, skipping to find the next section of interest. Concentrate on following the main ideas and blocking out detail," (McLaren 78).

When skimming, it is helpful to read the first sentence or couple of sentences at normal speed to see the overview of the reading, then

parts of the following paragraphs, looking for particular helpful words. In a longer work, such as a thick book, you may read the beginning paragraphs of relevant chapters. Mikulecky and Jeffries suggest that you can skim to find out what the writer thinks about something. This is the writer's **point of view.** To find out the writer's point of view, you need to read only a few important words or phrases (137).

2.3.3 Scan Reading

In longer works, you may choose certain parts to read quickly. When you have to choose between many books, it is often useful to look at the **Contents** (at the beginning) and the **Index** (at the end) of the books to decide which books, and even which pages or sections of a book or article, are going to be most helpful. Looking for particular information, such as a date, a name, or a definition, can also be achieved efficiently by means of scan reading.

Mikulecky and Jeffries differentiate between scan reading and skim reading in this way: "Scanning is very fast reading. When you scan, you look for information as quickly as you can. … When you scan, you can't read every word. You have to skip many words," (39).

McLaren defines scanning as looking for a particular word or set of words, ignoring other information, by glancing quickly through the pages of a text (McLaren 78). This is why scan reading is also quick reading, but in a different way than speed reading.

Practice 2
Using the Techniques of Speed Reading, Skim Reading, and Scan Reading

a. Read the paragraphs under the title "Speed Reading" (2.3.1) by yourself, using the technique of speed reading. Allow your eyes to look widely at chunks of the text instead of reading word for word. Practice this a few times.

b. Read the same paragraphs that you just read, using the technique of skim reading now. Practice this a few times.

c. Read the same paragraphs by scanning, searching for what these paragraphs state about how to use the technique of speed reading. Practice this a few times.

Practice 3
Comparison of Speed Reading, Skim Reading, and Scan Reading

Share with your partner from Practice 2 about your experiences of reading using speed reading, skim reading, and scan reading.

a. Which technique do you use the most often when you read a text quickly?

b. Do you use the techniques of speed reading, skim reading, or scan reading at certain times?

c. Are there any of these three techniques that you have not been using but you think would be helpful for you to try to use when you read?

Practice 4
Definitions of Speed Reading, Skim Reading, and Scan Reading

What are the differences between the three techniques described so far? Together with your friends, write a brief definition of these three techniques of reading.

Speed Reading ____

____

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Skim Reading ____

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Scan Reading ____

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